assistance upto 1988-89. The Ninth Finance Commission, as per terms of reference, assessed the Plan as well as non-plan revenue deficits of these States and recommended Plan and non-plan revenue deficit grants to these States for 1989-90 and 1990-95. Recommendations of the Commission were as such, accepted by the Central Government. Planning Commission had, therefore, indicated to these States that no additional Central assistance for meeting any gap in their resources on non-plan account would be considered from 1989-90 onwards. These States were advised to,, take necessary steps to explain their resource position i.e. revenue and expenditure to the Finance Commission.

However, keeping in view the increasing non-plan gaps of these States and representations made by them, the matter was reviewed and the National Development Council, in October, 1990, decided that Planning Commission may agree to the utilisation by these States, of not more than 10% of Central assistance, for covering their non-plan gap based on resource assessment' from year to year. Accordingly these States have been given the option of utilising 10% of the Central assistance allocated to them for non-plan gap from 1991-92. The total allocation of Central assistance for these States was increased by over 25 per cent in the Annual Plan 1991-92 over the previous year plan so that their development is not adversely affected.

Further more. National Development Council decided in October, 1990 to appoint a Committee of Experts to suggest Durable Solutions for the Financial Problems of the Special Category States. The Expert Committee has been set up by the Planning Commission and is working presently under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan, Member, Planning Commission.

Revalidation of Passports

*438. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the Statewise number of applications for passports which are pending for more than four weeks;

(b) whether it is a fact that system for old passports which were to be revalidated after five years has been discontinued in favour of new passports every ten years with new police verifications leading to avoidable load; if so, whether this time-tested system will be restored at the earliest; and

(c) whether passport holder's records will be computerised at each office of issue for easy handling?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

(b) Prior to 16.8.1990, passports were valid for five years and renewal required no fresh police verifications. With effect from 16.8.90, passports validity is 10 years; further while renewal of 5 year passport does not require fresh police verfication, this is required on expiry of 10 year passport for issue of a fresh one.

(c) There is a proposal to computerise passport holder's records at each Passport Office.

कतिपय सरकारी संगठनों को कपड़े की पूर्ति के लिए एजेन्टों को कमीशन का भुगतान

*439. डा० जिनेन्द्र कुमार जैन:
श्री राम जेठमलानी:

क्या वस्त्र मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि नेशनल टैक्सटाइल कारपोरेशन द्वारा संचालित अनेक कपड़ा मिलों ने गत कुछ वर्षों के दौरान रक्षा मंत्रालय और कुछ अन्य सरकारी विभागों को कपड़े की पूर्ति करने के लिए कुछ एजेंट नियुक्त किये थे;

(ख) यदि हां, तो ऐसे एजेन्टों की कुल संख्या कितनी है और इन्हें गत तीन वर्षों के दौरान कपड़ा मिलों द्वारा कमीशन के रूप में कुल कितनी राशि का भुगतान किया गया है;

(ग) क्या यह भी सच है कि ऐसी प्रथा को समाप्त